United Nations S/2017/533

Security Council

Distr.: General
21 June 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 20 June 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I hereby request that the annexed letter dated 17 June 2017 from the President of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces addressed to the President of the Security Council be circulated as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Abdallah Y. **Al-Mouallimi**
Permanent Representative

17-10358 (E) 230617

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 20 June 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Letter dated 17 June 2017 from the President of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces and the Syrian people at large, I write to you concerning the alarming situation in Dar'a, southern Syria. Notwithstanding the cessation of hostilities agreement and the various international efforts to establish a ceasefire in Syria, the Assad regime continues to pursue a purely military approach in an attempt to regain control over liberated territories. Most recently, the regime has embarked on a relentless campaign in Dar'a, the southern Syrian governorate that witnessed the birth of the Syrian revolution in 2011.

In its onslaught in Dar'a, the regime has been using all sorts of indiscriminate weapons and ammunition, including internationally banned napalm and barrel bombs. The ruthless bombardment has rendered much of the infrastructure, including medical facilities, dysfunctional and displaced much of the civilian population in the area. Remarkably, the Russian air force and Iranian militias are actively involved in this outrageous campaign as well. The humanitarian situation is deteriorating such that the provincial council has declared the area as "disaster-stricken", demanding that all measures be taken to stop Assad's atrocities.

This offensive constitutes not only a flagrant violation of all international resolutions and the ceasefire agreement, but also a major threat to the prospects of reaching a political solution in Syria. Should the Assad regime and its allies be allowed to pursue a military solution in Dar'a in the way that they did in Aleppo, with shameful international inaction, Assad will lack any incentive to engage in a political process towards genuine political transition and the Syrian people will completely lose faith in the political process that has been, thus far, the strategic choice of the Syrian opposition.

The National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces calls upon the Security Council to take note of this critical situation and to act immediately to compel the Assad regime and its allies to stop this offensive and engage seriously and in good faith in the political process. Furthermore, we call upon you to take every possible measure to address the humanitarian disaster incurred by the regime's onslaught, so as to ease the suffering of the civilian population. Most importantly, it is high time that the international community established a mechanism through which such violations of international resolutions and international law will no longer go unpunished. Assad and his allies must be held to account for their crimes in Syria, not only to give justice to their victims, but also to deter further violations and put an end to the military approach, making way for a genuine political process to evolve.

We count on the goodwill and efforts of the Security Council to swiftly address this critical situation and ultimately help the Syrian people to fulfil their just demands for freedom, justice and dignity.

(*Signed*) Riad **Seif**
President
National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces